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Jayne Kirkpatrick, Director, Public Affairs
Prepared by: John Boyette, Public Affairs Specialist

For more information: June Guralnick, Executive Director, Arts Commission, 996-3610

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PIEDMONT LAUREATE JAKI SHELTON GREEN TO APPEAR AT RALEIGH STARBUCKS AS PART OF FIRST WORD TASTING

Poet Jaki Shelton Green, the 2009 Piedmont Laureate, will be celebrating Arts & Humanities Month in October by offering a special poetry "Word Tasting" to the patrons of three Triangle restaurants on Thursday, Oct. 8. Here is Ms. Green's schedule that day;

- For the breakfast hour from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m., she will be at the Starbucks at 609 W. Peace Street;
- For lunch from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., she will be at the Piedmont restaurant at 401 Foster Street in Durham; and.
- At the dinner hour from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., she will be at Mama Dip's Kitchen at 408 W. Rosemary Street in Chapel Hill.

At all three restaurants, Ms. Green will read selections of her poetry and visit with restaurant patrons.

To attend the Word Tasting, customers must simply plan to have a meal (or coffee at Starbucks) at one of the participating restaurants during Ms. Green's scheduled appearance time. There will be no additional charge. Free Piedmont Laureate bookmarks will be distributed.

The 2009 Piedmont Laureate Program is sponsored by the City of Raleigh Arts Commission, Durham Arts Council, United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County, and the Orange County Arts Commission. "We launched the program to remind people how much they enjoy the literary arts, even in casual settings," said Sherry DeVries, executive director of the Durham Arts Council. "Since our region is so rich in talented authors and talented chefs, we wanted an event that brought those communities together.

"October is Arts & Humanities Month, and we want the Word Tasting to be one of the first celebrations," Ms. DeVries added.

The Piedmont Laureate program is dedicated to “building a literary bridge for residents to come together and celebrate the art of writing, enriching the lives of all our citizens.” The Laureate program in 2010 will expand to two additional counties for a total of five counties: Alamance, Durham, Johnston, Orange, and Wake. The program will be selecting an area novelist for its focus in the coming year.

For more information about the Piedmont Laureate program, visit www.piedmontlaureate.com. For more information about the Piedmont Laureate Word Tasting at the Starbucks on Peace Street in Raleigh, call Belva Parker, program coordinator for the City of Raleigh Arts Commission, at 996-3610 or Belva.parker@ci.raleigh.nc.us.

The City of Raleigh Arts Commission, established in 1977 as the official advisory body and advocate for the arts to the Raleigh City Council, holds the distinction of being the first municipal arts commission created in North Carolina. Serving as the leading force to champion the arts with Raleigh citizens and their representatives, the Arts Commission’s myriad activities foster, support, and promote the arts in the Capital City.

{NOTE TO MEDIA: Attached is the “Word Tasting” poster designed by Jennings, an advertising, public relations and brand development agency in Chapel Hill. }